Arrest Rates

DESCRIPTION OF SUMMARY LEVEL ARREST FILES

California collects records on felony arrests, misdemeanor arrests, and juvenile status arrests (e.g., truancy or curfew violations) occurring within the state. This data collection, called the Monthly Arrest and Citation Register (MACR), includes details of the arrest (date, offense, arrest), basic demographic information, and limited information on the disposition of the arrest. We have prepared two summary files derived from the underlying data collected in the MACR for the years 1980 through 2013. Data for 2014 was not included due to the fact that matching census data is currently only available through 2013. The summary files permit user estimates of trends in arrests for specific demographic and offense groupings as well as analysis of arrest-age profiles for the years covered.

Both files are in excel format. Each file aggregates arrests for given year, sex, race, and offense type combinations and presents total arrests, a population estimate from U.S. census data, and an arrest rate per 100,000 (calculated by dividing total arrests by population and multiplying by 100,000).

The file "Arrest Summary File 1 (Broad Age).xls" has the following variables:
- Sex (possible values: Both combined, Males, Females)
- Race (possible values: All Combined, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Other, White)
- Arrest type (possible values: All combined, felony –drug, felony-other, felony-property, felony-violent and sex offenses, misdemeanor, status)
- Year (possible values: integers from 1980 through 2013)
- Juvenile indicator (possible values: 0 for adults, 1 for juveniles)
- Total arrests
- Arrests per 100,000 California residents
- Population

Choosing specific values for the variables sex, race, arrest type, year, and age group identifies a single arrest total, arrest rate, and population estimate.

The file "Arrest Summary File 2(detailed age).xls" has the following variables:
- Sex (possible values: Both combined, Males, Females)
- Race (possible value: All Combined, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Other, White)
- Arrest type (possible value: All combined, felony-drug, felony-other, felony-property, felony-violent and sex offenses, misdemeanor, status)
- Year (possible values: integers from 1980 through 2013)
- Age group (labels for two-year age groups with possible values: <2, 2-3, 3-4, 4-5, etc.)

- Maximum age group value (provides numeric value of the upper end of each age bracket with possible values: 1,3,5,7, etc.)
- Total arrests
- Arrests per 100,000 California residents
- Population

Choosing specific values for the variables sex, race, arrest type, year, and age group identifies a single arrest total, arrest rate, and population estimate.

ESTIMATION METHODOLOGY FOR POPULATION BENCHMARKS

To analyze changes in arrest rates over time and differences in arrest rates across detailed demographic groups, one needs estimates of the base population to calculate an arrest rate (on this page, all rates are expressed as arrests per 100,000 state residents). Population totals for the state are readily available from the U.S. Census Bureau, as are detailed tabulations by demographic group for select years (generally, those corresponding to the decennial census years). For many of the years in our time period, however, we must estimate population totals for detailed demographic groups for years that lie between decennial censuses (commonly referred to as inter-census years). In this brief note, we discuss our exact data sources and how we estimate population totals for detailed year, gender, race, and age groupings.

For the years 2001 through 2013, we use data from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Samples (IPUMS) from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey maintained by the Minnesota Population Data Center (see https://www.ipums.org/). These micro-records include a person weight variable which provides an estimate of the number of individuals in the state that the person statistically represents. Summing the weights for all observations in a state generates an estimate of the overall state population. Summing the weights for a subset of the observations (for example, black males 10 to 11 years of age in 2008) generates a population estimate for this demographic group. The American Community Survey exists for each year from 2001 through 2013 (the latest available in the IPUMS files).

For the years 1980, 1990, and 2000, we estimate population totals from the IPUMS 5 percent sample from the U.S. Census of Housing and Population. For the inter-census years 1981 through 1989 and 1991 through 1999, we estimate population totals by linear interpolation between the two census estimates. That is to say, we assume that a demographic group population varies evenly across years in a manner that is consistent with (for example) the population total for the group in 1980 and the comparable total in 1990.

We should note that the sum of weight from the IPUMS files do not exactly match the official July 1st annual population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau. For example, the IPUMS population estimate for 2011 is 37,691,912 while the July 1st Census Bureau estimate for that

year is 37,701,901. For 2012, the comparable figures are 38,041,430 and 38,062,780. In both instances, the difference is less than one tenth of a percentage point and does not generate a qualitatively different overall arrest rate for the year. To maintain consistency across all arrest rate tabulations, we use population estimates from the IPUMS data as the population benchmark for all tabulations on this page. In addition, the population estimates on the posted summary arrests file data are tabulated in a similar manner.

We should note how we define race/ethnicity with the IPUMS data. Beginning in 2000, the census permitted individuals to choose more than one race. In addition, persons of Hispanic origin can be of any race. We defined mutually exclusive race and ethnicity categories. All individuals who indicate that they are of Hispanic origin are classified as Hispanic regardless of race. For the years 2000 on, we identify whites, blacks, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Native Americans as well individuals who do not identify as Hispanic and select one race only. Non-Hispanic individuals who are multi-racial or have a race that does not fit into the groups listed are grouped into the "other race" category. For years prior to 2000, all is the same with the exception that there are no multi-race observations to allocate to a specific racial group.

BACKGROUND ON MONTHLY ARREST AND CITATION REGISTER:

Data Set Overview and History

The Department of Justice (DOJ) Criminal Justice Statistics Center (CJSC) collects information on all adult and juvenile arrests and citations in California. The Monthly Arrest and Citation Register (MACR) data are reported as individual line-item arrests to the CJSC as part of the Federal Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program by law enforcement agencies (LEA) throughout the state. Information developed from the system provides statistical arrest data for local, county, regional, and state agencies.

Although the CJSC has collected MACR data since the early 1950's, the data is only available at the statewide level in former publications. It was not until 1980 that the CJSC established an electronic repository and defined standards and procedures, resulting in consistent reporting.

Statutory Authority

The DOJ has statutory authority to collect MACR data pursuant to Government Code sections 13010-13012 and 13020-13023.

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Data Characteristics and Known Limitations

1. General Information
   a. MACR data follows a hierarchy rule meaning if a person is arrested for multiple offenses at one time, MACR selects only the most serious offense based on the severity of possible punishment for retention.
   b. CJSC stopped collecting arrests/ citations for infractions in 2005.
   c. Felony arrest counts may include some misdemeanor warrants for felony offenses.
   d. The subjectivity of the classification and labeling process must be considered in analyses of race/ethnic groups data.

2. Reporting Agencies
   a. CJSC collects arrest data from LEAs that participate in the UCR Program.
   b. CJSC does not collect arrests from District Attorney's offices, probation departments, state agencies with investigatory personnel (such as the DOJ or Alcohol and Beverage Control), or other similar types of investigatory agencies. CJSC is aware of these agency's efforts to enforce the law via arrest and citations; however the current collection of crimes and arrest data from UCR reporting LEAs are consistent and representative of crime in California.

3. Significant Agency Notes
   a. Bakersfield Police Department (PD) and Oakland PD were not able to report complete arrest data in 1995. Estimates for both agencies were added to the statewide totals for publications.
   b. San Francisco (SF) PD does not report all race/ethnic groups. When the Asian/Pacific Islander race/ethnic codes expanded in 1991, SFPD did not make adjustments to report the additional groups. Beginning in 2012, SFPD changed reporting practices, but now only report using 5 categories similar to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) categories: White, Black, American Indian, Other Asian, and Other (see 'FBI Data' below).
   c. Over the years, many agencies have come and gone, merged, or were unable to report data for a complete year. There is no complete list available for these types of agency limitations.

4. Recent legislative changes that significantly influenced data
   a. In 2011, the lower limit of felony theft was raised from $400 to $950, contributing to the decrease in felony theft arrests and increase in misdemeanor theft arrests.
   b. In 2011, some misdemeanor marijuana statutes were re-classified to infractions leading to a decrease in misdemeanor marijuana arrests.
   c. In 2014, California voters passed Proposition 47, which reduced numerous state statutes from felonies to misdemeanors.

5. Recent UCR definition change

    In 2014, the FBI UCR changed the crime of "forcible rape" to "rape" and redefined to include the crimes of sodomy, oral copulation, and sexual penetration with a foreign object.

6. BCS and Summary Codes
    a. A BCS code is a code which combines together like statutes (offenses) into groupings that are assigned a code for use in statistical analysis. BCS stands for the Bureau of Criminal Statistics which in now the CJSC.
    b. A Summary Code combines like BCS codes for more general statistical analysis.
    c. Summary Code-Published Counts
        i. The CJSC only publishes counts for the following summary codes:
            - Felony = 01-25
            - Misdemeanor = 29-64, 76
        ii. Arrests for the following offenses are considered "Other reported offenses" and not included in CJSC publications:
            - Summary code 26 = Felony Federal offense
            - Summary code 27 = Felony outside warrant
            - Summary code 28 = Felony probation/parole violation
            - Summary code 65 = Misdemeanor civil drunk
            - Summary code 66 = Misdemeanor outside warrant
            - Summary code 67 = Misdemeanor probation/parole violation
            - Summary code 74 = Misdemeanor miscellaneous traffic

7. Disposition Code

    CJSC combines Disposition codes "3" (misdemeanor complaint sought) and "4" (felony complaint sought) to create a singular disposition code "9" labeled "Complaint Sought". These codes have always been combined for publications. Beginning in 1995, CJSC began applying a code 9 (complaint sought) whenever raw data was sent to outside requestors.

8. FBI Data
    a. MACR data is sent to the FBI in summary form (not by arrest incident). The data is organized by *National Crime Information Center* (NCIC) code, FBI offense code, gender, race, and age group. Only arrests of interest to the FBI are summed together and included in the FBI extract; therefore, FBI counts will not match CJSC published counts. Additionally, the FBI does not distinguish between felony and misdemeanor.

        Here are a few examples of differences:
        - The FBI includes probation/parole violations
        - The FBI does not include misdemeanor traffic violations
        - The FBI does not include felony and misdemeanor hit and run arrests

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   b. The FBI currently captures the following race groups:
   - White
   - Black or African American,
   - American Indian or Alaska Native
   - Asian
   - Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander

   The FBI does not utilize Hispanic as a race group. All of California's arrests of Hispanics are categorized as white when summarized by race and then counted again in the Ethnicity category as Hispanic or Latino.

Definition of MACR Terms

Adult – a person 18 years of age or older.

Aggravated Assault – an unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. This type of assault usually is accompanied by the use of a weapon or by means likely to produce death or great bodily harm (UCR definition).

Arrest – taking a person into custody, in a case and in the manner authorized by law. An arrest may be made by a peace officer or by a private person (California Penal Code section 834).

Arson – any willful or malicious burning or attempt to burn, with or without intent to defraud, a dwelling house, public building, motor vehicle or aircraft, personal property of another, etc. (UCR definition).

Burglary – the unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or a theft. Attempted burglary is included (UCR definition).

Charge –a formal allegation that a specific person has committed a specific offense.

Citation – a written order, issued by the police for a violation, to appear before a magistrate or probation officer at a later date.

Complaint – a verified written accusation, filed by a prosecuting attorney with a local criminal court, which charges one or more persons with the commission of one or more offenses.

Disposition-Law Enforcement – an action taken on behalf of the law enforcement agency as the result of an arrest. Examples of police dispositions are: adults - released by law enforcement, referred to another jurisdiction, or a misdemeanor or felony complaint sought;

juveniles – handled within the department, referred to another agency, or referred to the probation department or juvenile court.

Felony – a crime that is punishable with death or by imprisonment in the state prison, or notwithstanding any other provision of law, by imprisonment in a count jail under the provisions of subdivision (h) of section 1170. Every other crime or public offense is a misdemeanor except those offenses that are classified as infractions [California Penal Code section 17(a)].

Homicide – the willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another. Murder and non-negligent manslaughter are included (UCR definition).

Infraction – an offense punishable by fine or other penalty, but not by incarceration.

Jurisdiction – the territory, subject matter, or person over which lawful authority may be exercised.

Juvenile – a person under the age of 18.

Larceny-Theft – the unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession or constructive possession of another. Attempted larcenies are included. Embezzlement, confidence games, forgery, check fraud, etc., are excluded (UCR definition).

Misdemeanor – a crime punishable by imprisonment in a county jail for up to one year.

Monthly Arrest and Citation Register (MACR) – a reporting system used to collect information on adult and juvenile arrests and citations by police and sheriff's departments. This register contains data on arrest offenses, arrestee characteristics (age, gender, and race/ethnic group), and law enforcement dispositions.

Motor Vehicle Theft – the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle. A motor vehicle is self-propelled and runs on land surface and not on rails. Motorboats, construction equipment, airplanes, and farming equipment are specifically excluded from this category (UCR definition).

Not Aggravated Simple Assault – assaults and attempted assaults where no weapon is used and which do not result in serious or aggravated injury to the victim (UCR definition).

Offense – the charged offense is the crime for which the defendant was arrested or filed on by the district attorney. The convicted offense is the offense the defendant was convicted of or pleaded guilty to in court. The sustained offense is the offense for which the juvenile court sustains a petition.

Penal Code (PC) – the California Penal Code contains statutes that define criminal offenses and specify corresponding punishments along with criminal justice system mandates and procedures.

Population at Risk – that portion of the total population who, because of like characteristics to the specific study group, are considered "at risk." For example, if one were studying juvenile arrestees, all persons between 10 and 17 years of age would constitute the at-risk population.

Property Crimes – crimes against property. This category includes burglary, motor vehicle theft, and larceny-theft.

Property Offenses (for MACR, publication, and interactive table purposes) – felony arrest offenses for crimes against property. This category includes burglary; theft; motor vehicle theft; forgery, check, and access card offenses; and arson.

Rape – penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim (UCR definition, revised 2013).

Robbery – the taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear (UCR definition).

Status Offense – an act or conduct, described by Welfare and Institutions Code section 601, which is declared by statute to be an offense but only when committed or engaged in by a juvenile and which can be adjudicated only in juvenile court.

Summary Data System – a data collection method based on the sum of the number of events or counts that occur in a specified period of time (e.g., Crime and Clearance file)

Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) – a federal reporting system that provides crime data based on police statistics submitted by law enforcement agencies throughout the nation. The DOJ administers and forwards the data for California to the federal program.

Violent Crimes – crimes committed against people. This category includes homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Violent Offenses (for MACR, publication, and interactive table purposes) – felony arrest offenses for crimes against people. This category includes homicide, rape, robbery, assault, and kidnapping.

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Data Element and Values Defined

Data Layout and Codes

Position	Element	Definition	Codes
1-2	Record ID	Flag that describes the action of the record. Codes 14, 24, and 94 represent arrest records. Codes 21, 32, and 91 represent deleted records or records of no arrest.	**Arrest Codes:** 14 - Add a record 24 - Replace a specific record 94 - Record sent to FBI **Records of No Arrest Codes:** 21 - Report of no arrest 91 - Report of no arrest sent to FBI **Deleted Record Code:** 32 - Specific delete action
3-7	Jurisdiction (BCS)	The code/ID number assigned to the reporting agency (old).	Old agency code listing no longer used.
8-11	Jurisdiction (NCIC)	The code/ID number assigned to the reporting agency (current).	Current agency code listing displayed with a single digit in four sequential positions. If you combine positions 8-9 this represents the code of the county the reporting agency resides in (values: 01-58).
12-13	Filler	These are place holder positions.	Blank
14-21	Arrest Date	The date the arrest occurred.	(YYYYMMDD)
22	Summary Level	The level assigned to the record used to distinguish between juvenile and adult records.	F - Felony (Adults) J - Juvenile M - Misdemeanor (Adults)
23	Level of Offense	The level of the offense the individual was arrested for.	1 - Status offenses (juvenile only) 2 - Misdemeanor 3 - Felony
24-26	Offense (BCS)	The code assigned to an offense. This code combines groups of like statutes that are grouped for statistical analysis.	BCS code listing 3-digit numeric
27-28	Summary Offense	The codes assigned to a BCS code. This code combines like BCS codes for more	Summary code listing 2-digit numeric

		general statistical analysis.	
29	Filler	These are place holder positions (columns).	Blank
30-32	FBI Offense	The FBI's grouping of California offenses for national comparisons. These do not distinguish between felony and misdemeanor levels.	FBI code listing 2 or 3-digit numeric
33-39	Reference Number	System generated line number unique to the record. This data is not retained in the legacy file past one year.	"SEALED"
40-69	Name	The name of the individual arrested. This data is not retained in the legacy file past one year.	"SEALED"
70-77	Date of Birth	The date of birth of the individual arrested.	(YYYYMMDD)
78-80	Age	The age of the individual at time of arrest.	3-digit numeric
81	Race/ Ethnicity	The race/ethnicity of the individual arrested.	1, W - White 2, H - Hispanic 3, B - Black 4, I - American Indian 5, C - Chinese 6, J - Japanese 7, F - Filipino 8, O - Other 9, P - Pacific Islander A - Other Asian D - Cambodian G - Guamanian K - Korean L - Laotian S - Samoan U - Hawaiian V - Vietnamese Z - Asian Indian

82	Gender	The gender of the individual arrested.	1 - Male 2 - Female
83	Type of Status	This code describes the type of apprehension.	1 - Cited 2 - Booked 3 - Other
84	Disposition	The law enforcement disposition of the charge, not the person.	1 - Released (adults only) 2 - Turned over to other agency 3 - Misdemeanor complaint sought (adults only) 4 - Felony complaint sought (adults only) 5 - Referred to juvenile probation department (juveniles only) 6 - Handled within department (juveniles only)